

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND
RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2010
House Report 111-316, pages 103 - 104

Wildfire Suppression Operations.—The conference agreement includes \$383,797,000 for wildland fire suppression instead of \$369,797,000 as proposed by the House and \$294,797,000 as proposed by the Senate. The Senate recommendation included an allocation of \$75,000,000 within the suppression amount for a wildfire suppression contingency reserve. The conferees note the use of \$125,000,000 in prior year funding. An additional \$61,000,000 for suppression activities is provided in the new FLAME Wildfire Suppression Reserve Fund. The conferees note that the Forest Service wildland fire suppression accounts are provided an additional \$1,410,505,000, including \$413,000,000 in the new Forest Service FLAME Wildfire Suppression Reserve Fund. Thus, the sum for wildfire suppression for both Departments, including both the suppression and the FLAME Wildfire Suppression Reserve Fund accounts, is \$1,855,302,000. This sum is equal to the request and \$526,164,000 above the fiscal year 2009 funding level. This is the largest funding increase ever provided for non-emergency wildfire suppression activities.

The conferees reiterate that both the Interior Department and the Forest Service should ensure that cost containment is an important priority when suppressing wildland fires. Both Departments must examine and report promptly to the Congress and on agency websites, using independent panels, on each and every individual wildfire incident which results in suppression expenses greater than \$10,000,000.

The conferees intend that amounts provided through the FLAME Fund, together with amounts provided through the Wildland Fire Management appropriations account, should fully fund anticipated wildland fire suppression requirements in advance of the fire season and prevent future borrowing from non-fire programs. To satisfy this requirement, the conferees direct the Secretaries to develop new methods for formulating fire suppression funding estimates for the Wildland Fire Management and FLAME Fund appropriations accounts as part of their fiscal year 2011 budget request. In formulating these estimates, the conferees expect the Secretaries to consider data regarding actual prior-year fire suppression expenditures, predictive modeling, and any other criteria that they deem appropriate, consistent with the direction provided in this Act. It is the intent of conferees to provide sufficient funds for FLAME Wildfire Suppression Reserve accounts to preclude the necessity for transferring funds from other non-fire programs and activities except in unusual circumstances.